

City of Kalamazoo
PLANNING COMMISSION
Minutes
July 19, 2018
FINAL

Second Floor, City Hall
Commission Chambers
241W. South Street, Kalamazoo, MI 49007

Members Present: Rachel Hughes-Nilsson, Chair; Gregory Milliken Vice Chair; Sakhi Vyas; Derek Wissner; Alfonso Espinosa; Charley Coss; Jack Baartman; Emily Greenman Wright

Members Excused: James Pitts

City Staff: Christina Anderson, City Planner; Robert Bauckham, Senior Development Planner; Clyde Robinson, City Attorney and Beth Cheeseman, Code Administration Clerk/Cashier

A. CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Hughes-Nilsson called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL

Planner Anderson proceeded with roll call and determined that the aforementioned members were present.

C. ADOPTION OF FORMAL AGENDA

Planner Anderson added an agenda item under New Business to approve the revised calendar for the year.

Commissioner Coss, supported by Commissioner Greenman Wright, moved approval of the July 19, 2018 Planning Commission agenda as amended. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Planner Anderson noted that one change had been made in the June 7, 2018 minutes regarding the Cork Street vote. It was listed as approval 4-1, but left out that the one was Commissioner Espinosa. That has been added to the official record.

Commissioner Milliken, supported by Commissioner Vyas, moved approval of the June 7, 2018 Planning Commission minutes as amended. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

E. COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

F. PUBLIC HEARINGS

P.C. #2018.08: Request from the Bronson Healthcare Group for a special use permit to allow a parking lot use at 908, 912, 914, 916 and 920 John Street and 117, 118, 121 and 122 Heilman Court. [Recommendation: motion to approve the request, with one condition.]

Commissioner Milliken announced that he was abstaining from request because he works at Bronson and has been involved in this project.

Planner Bauckham presented the staff report for both P.C. #2018.08 and P.C. #2018.09 as they are related projects. However, Planner Bauckham reported that each item needed separate hearings and separate votes. The first request was for a Special Use permit for a new parking lot using nine parcels of land in the Edison neighborhood. The applicant owns the nine parcels which are currently vacant. Bronson is in the early stages of planning a new building at Vine and John. This property currently contains a surface parking lot for the hospital. The parking lot will be reduced for the new building and they want to replace parking on the proposed lots. The new parking lot would consist of 164 spaces whereas the current lot has 154 spaces. Current zoning is CO (Commercial Office district) and RM-36 (Residential Multiple Family District). Parking lots are allowed in these zones by special use permit. Lighting and stormwater management would need to meet City specifications. Future land use for these parcels is urban edge which supports this use. Staff recommends approval of this special use permit with the condition that Heilman Court is vacated by City Commission.

The second request is to vacate Heilman Court which is a dead end street east of Burdick Street. The east portion of this street would be part of the new parking lot. The applicant would like to vacate the entire Court out to Burdick Street. The only development is parking lot for the Joldersma & Klein funeral home. The funeral home supports the vacancy request and would like to have their portion of the Court adjacent to their properties. If vacated, the applicant and the funeral home would pay to the City the fair market value for their portion of the property. Public services wants an easement for underground utilities for access and maintenance. Staff recommends a request to the City Commission for the vacation of Heilman Court with the condition of the utility easement.

The applicant has spoken to both Edison and Vine Neighborhood Directors and no objections were voiced. They also spoke with many neighbors. Notices were mailed, and many letters of support were received. If a Special Use permit and street vacation is approved, the applicant would need to submit for site plan review.

Planner Bauckham reviewed maps of current and proposed parcels. He indicated the parking lot is needed for the applicant's future expansion plans. Planner Bauckham reported that except for Heilman Court the applicant owns all of the property for the Special Use Permit request. Planner Bauckham shared the

rationale of the staff recommendation: Heilman Court is no longer needed by the City of Kalamazoo; parking lots are an allowed use in these zoning areas with a Special Use Permit; these requests meet the economic vitality goal of Strategic Vision for the City.

The applicant, Mr. Joshua Fitzgibbon from the Bronson project team, came forward to speak. He stated that the vacation of Heilman Court will allow for the construction of the parking lot. He explained that this was necessary due to growth at Bronson campus and for future plans. Mr. Mike Preston, Civil Engineer from Prein & Newhoff, came forward to give details of the project. He stated it will be an asphalt parking lot with 164 spaces. Heilman court and a portion of the existing parking lot will be removed so they can line everything up with existing drive. The area will be landscaped to City requirements. The parking lot will have it's own Stormwater storage system – pretreatment of stormwater with a water quality unit and an underground stormwater storage and infiltration system. Mr. Preston stated there won't be an increase to the City's stormwater system.

Commissioner Vyas asked if there were any additional precautions in place for water and flooding concerns. Mr. Preston said that the underground stormwater storage system will handle a lot. He said the specific calculations will be provided to the City during the siteplan process.

Commissioner Espinosa asked who will use the parking lot and if it would be available to the general public for events. Mr. Fitzgibbon stated that it's primary use will be for providers and employees of Bronson.

Commissioner Baartman inquired about the number of trees being removed and trees to be planted. Mr. Preston said he did not have a number for removal and the number of trees being planed will be a part of the site plan process.

Commissioner Hughes-Nilsson opened the public comments portion of the hearing.

Ms. Judy Markusse Paget, Executive Director of the Hospital Hospitality House came forward and spoke in support of the project.

Commissioner Wissner, supported by Commissioner Vyas, motioned to close the public comment portion of the hearing. A voice vote was taken and passed.

Commissioner Coss, with support from Commissioner Wissner, moved to approve the special use permit to allow a parking lot use at 908, 912, 914, 916 and 920 John Street and 117, 118, 121 and 122 Heilman Court with the condition of the utility easement being granted.

Planner Bauckham pointed out that the condition was that Heilman Court be vacated – not for the easement.

Commissioners Coss and Wissner amended their motion to stated, **with the condition of Heilman Court being vacated.**

Commissioner Wissner stated that he is in favor of this project. He said that Bronson is a great asset in City and any developments in this area are welcome.

A roll call vote was taken and the request was approved with 7 in favor. Commissioner Milliken abstained.

P.C. #2018.09: Request from the Bronson Healthcare Group to vacate Heilman Court east of S. Burdick Street. [Recommendation: motion to recommend to the City Commission to approve the request, with one condition.]

There was no additional staff report, information from applicant, or public comments.

Commissioner Greenman Wright, supported by Commissioner Espinosa, motioned to close the public comment portion of the hearing. A voice vote was taken and passed.

Commissioner Vyas wanted clarification about the condition. Commissioner Hughes-Nilsson stated that the condition is the utility easement.

Commissioner Greenman Wright asked for specifics about the fairmarket value of the property. Planner Bauckham stated that the entire Court is worth \$4000. He stated that Bronson's portion is \$3,045 and the funeral home's portion is \$955.

Commissioner Wissner, supported by Commissioner Coss, motioned to recommend to the City Commission to approve the request to vacate Heilman Court east of S. Burdick Street with one condition that the easement for City utilities be made.

A roll call vote was taken and the request was approved with 7 in favor. Commissioner Milliken abstained.

P.C. #2018.10: Request from the Harrison Circle LDHA, LP to rezone 525 and 535 E. Ransom Street and 617 Harrison Street from Zone RMU (Residential, Mixed-Use District), Zone CMU (Commercial, Mixed-Use District), and Subareas 3 and 4 of the Riverfront Overlay District to Zone CMU (Commercial, Mixed-Use District) and Subarea 4 of the Overlay District. [Recommendation: motion to recommend to the City Commission to approve the rezoning.]

Planner Bauckham presented the staff report for this case. Two of the parcels are located in the E. Ransom Street with the third parcel on Harrison. The applicant owns all three of these vacant parcels and they would like to build a mixed-use building. The building would be on the Ransom Street parcels with the parking lot on the Harrison Street parcel. The first floor would contain commercial & office space. There would be mix of market-rate and affordable housing on the upper floors. All of 535 E. Ransom and most of the other parcels are in the RMU and subarea 3

category of the Riverfront Overlay zoning district. The westernmost parcel at 525 E Ransom Street is in the CMU and subarea 4 district. The applicant would like to have all parcels rezoned to the CMU zone and place them in the subarea 4 of the Overlay. This area is in the commercial node of the 2025 Master Plan. These changes better reflect the mixed-use vision of the intersection and area of the City. CMU and subarea 4 allows more commercial uses than the current zoning. If this is approved, the applicant will need to have a site plan approved. The applicant spoke with the Director of the Northside Association and the neighbors - there were no objections.

Planner Bauckham reviewed the maps, noting that the land is currently considered tax exempt because it was owned by the City Brownfield Authority. The building would be 15,000 sq ft, five stories in height and 80 units. Parking would consist of 22 spots within building, 27 on the north lot and 32 on building site outside. Rezoning will allow the desired building height and lot coverage. Parcels to west and south are already zoned CMU, subarea 4. These parcels are in the commercial node of the Master Plan and commercial and mixed-use is desired in this area. This rezoning addresses the economic vitality goal for the Strategic vision for the City.

Commissioner Espinosa asked for clarification of the tax exempt status. Planner Bauckham explained that with the new owners, it will become a taxed property.

Commissioner Milliken asked for a map of the subareas. Planner Bauckham told him he did not. Planner Anderson clarified – the zone is CMU on back half/Riverfront Overlay 4 and RMU/Riverfront Overlay 3 on the eastern half.

Applicant, Mr. Herb Ayers, representing the Harrison Circle Group, came forward to speak. They asked for approval of the zoning change stating that it conforms to the City's commercial node and complies with 2025 Master Plan vision. Mr. Ayers stated that they have been formulating this plan for quite some time, but the completion of the roundabout was essential before they could go forward with it. He shared that this building will provide affordable workforce housing on a 30% sliding scale of income. Mr. Ayers said that 80% of the project will be affordable housing if MSHDA approves. The applicant has submitted an application to MSHDA.

Commissioner Greenman Wright inquired about how many units would be the affordable housing units. The applicant responded that 64 would be workforce housing and the rest will be market.

Commissioner Wissner asked about the commercial component to the mixed-use building. Mr. Ayers responded that they envision a coffee shop on the lower level with possibly enough space for two commercial uses. They would like it to have a shared eating space for clients that could be converted for resident use in evening hours.

Commissioner Coss requested information about the size of apartments and the type of occupants desired for the building. Mr. Ayers cautioned that their plan is very preliminary. They believe there will be one bedrooms (620-720 sq. ft. range), efficiencies, and a limited number of two bedrooms. They anticipate the occupants will be mostly single people and people working downtown. People who are looking for a walk/bike solution for live/work. Mr. Ayers

cited that the classic example of tenants would be people who work at Bronson or a couple driving one car. He said that is their vision for it and that is what they have seen in the Walbridge Common Building.

Commissioner Hughes-Nilsson opened the public comment portion of the hearing.

Ms. April Barfoot came forward to speak in support of the project. She mentioned the Walbridge Common building and stated that the area of the Northside has grown significantly. Ms. Barfoot sold a 3-bedroom house and thought she would be able to find something affordable downtown. She stated that she was on a waitlist for 18 months. Ms. Barfoot said the residential buildings have assisted that end of town in really coming alive. It is exciting to see new life on that side of town.

Commissioner Coss, supported by Commissioner Greenman Wright, motioned to close the public comment portion of the hearing. A voice vote was taken and passed.

Commissioner Vyas, supported by Commissioner Coss, motioned to recommend to the City Commission to approve to rezone 525 and 535 E. Ransom Street and 617 Harrison Street from Zone RMU (Residential, Mixed-Use District), Zone CMU (Commercial, Mixed-Use District), and Subareas 3 and 4 of the Riverfront Overlay District to Zone CMU (Commercial, Mixed-Use District) and Subarea 4 of the Overlay District.

Commissioner Vyas stated that, as someone who bikes to the coop and McKenzie's, she would like to see additional growth and more people walking around in this area. She said this seems like a wonderful plan and she is very excited about it.

Commissioner Greenman Wright also expressed excitement for the project. She shared that she has lived in that area, traveling and shopping the area frequently. Commissioner Greenman Wright shared the reason the area is available to develop was strategic underdevelopment that happened before WWII. She said this is a new chapter, but the area had a sad past.

Commissioner Milliken spoke from a zoning perspective. He stated the zoning change is clearly in line with Master Plan and Imagine Kalamazoo. This includes switching to more of a commercial emphasis in a commercial node. Commissioner Milliken requested that the Riverfront Overlay zoning be placed on a list for review. He stated he is in favor of this rezoning.

Commissioner Wissner praised the developers for their project and their track history in the past decade with this area. He stated the area has seen tremendous growth which was spearheaded by developers in this project.

Commissioner Coss agreed with Commissioner Wissner adding that it is good to get the property back on the tax rolls. He said it is a great service for sector of housing needed and it geographically fits the Master Plan and development.

A roll call vote was taken and the request was unanimously approved.

P.C. #2018.11: Request from 615 Holdings, LLC and 10th Street Properties, LLC to rezone 615 W. Kalamazoo Avenue from Zone M-1 (Manufacturing, Limited District) to Zone CMU (Commercial, Mixed-Use District). [Recommendation: motion to recommend to the City Commission to approve the rezoning.]

Planner Bauckham presented the staff report for this case. This parcel is on the eastside of Stuart neighborhood. The parcel contains a 6500 sq. ft. vacant building - currently in disrepair. The parcel is in zone M1 (Manufacturing district) which is not appropriate for this area. The request is to rezone this parcel to CMU. They would like to build two mixed-use buildings. Each of the buildings would be three stories in height with commercial and residential on first floor, and then residential uses on the upper floors. Variances were already given for having residential on the first floor. There will be 18 apartments and four office spaces. The property is in the Stuart Historic district- and that board conceptionally approved the removal of the building. They did ask to see siteplan of new building. The property to the west was rezoned from M-1 to RD-19 for a Bed & Breakfast use. There are non-residential uses to the north, west and south of this property. The project was presented at a neighborhood meeting. There are letters of support from neighborhood director. There is also a petition of support.

Planner Bauckham reviewed maps of the area. He summarized by saying that new manufacturing uses are not desired in this area of Stuart neighborhood. The current building on the site is vacant and in disrepair. The proposed mixed-use project is compatible with adjacent uses. The rezoning would meet the Economic Vitality goal in the Strategic Vision for the City.

Planner Bauckham did mention there have been concerns regarding the connection to Eleanor Street. There was discussion of placing a gate on the property to cut off some traffic to Eleanor Street. He reminded the Commissioners that this is a rezoning hearing. The siteplan process is where those issues will be worked out.

Commissioner Vyas asked for clarification about the Future Land use designation (RD-1) and the request for rezoning to CMU. She asked if there was any conflict between CMU and RD1.

Planner Bauckham responded that because the project is adjacent to the downtown land-use and looking at what is in the area, they feel comfortable moving ahead.

Applicant, Attorney Bill Murphy, came forward to speak. He stated the project started when he was looking for a new office space. The building on this parcel was abandoned in 2006. There have been various ideas for property, but nothing that was an appropriate use for the Stuart Neighborhood. He has partnered with Mr. Justin Gregory, a local business man, and NY developer, Mr. Ron Fe. Attorney Murphy stated that the two buildings will have a 4000 sq. ft. footprint. There will be one ADA apartment in each building on the ground floor. There will be two commercial spaces in the bottom of each of them – serviced by Kalamazoo Avenue. There will be four apartments on each of the 2nd and 3rd floors. The applicant stated these will be high-

end apartments with balconies. Attorney Murphy stated that they obtained the property in January along with 702 Eleanor Street. Their plan is to split 702 from 708 Eleanor and add it to 615 W Kalamazoo Avenue. The Historic Board approved tearing down the building and the use of 702 for parking for residents in the back. Attorney Murphy said that there was discussion about traffic on Eleanor street. It seemed that the real problem in Stuart Neighborhood is at night with people using it as a pass through. The applicant proposed to put in an electric night gate. The gate would close every night at end of business and open in the morning for business day. He anticipates that only nine residents in the back would be using Eleanor Street. Attorney Murphy stated that their project will clean up a blighted City property. The property has asbestos in the building and the property has petroleum and heavy metals. They will be working with the Brownfield people to clean this all up. They plan to contain 100% of the water underground on this property. The applicant said there will be 15,000 sq feet of green space. The reason to open up Eleanor it is a safety issue for emergency vehicles and personnel. He summarized by saying that they attended three Stuart meetings and received no negative comments – people are excited and this will raise property values. The project will take out blight and pollution.

Commissioner Milliken asked what kinds of commercial uses would be in the building. The applicant stated that their law office, a real estate office and possibly a financial planner.

Commissioner Greenman Wright clarified that these are market-rate apartments.

Commissioner Hughes-Nilsson opened the public comment portion of the hearing.

Mr. Jeff Siuda stepped forward in support of the request. He stated that the Stuart neighborhood has worked really hard to find a good use of this property. This project would complete the neighborhood plan and be a great compliment to the area.

Ms. Dana Underwood, Stuart Neighborhood Association, told Commissioners they had seven meetings over the course of 10 months, to review this project. Ms. Underwood said that all the meetings were publicized and nothing the applicant said is new. She stated there were some concerns and questions expressed, but the applicant worked directly with those residents to resolve concerns. Ms. Underwood said he has been a conscientious developer in approaching the neighborhood. The first issues she knew of were raised in the July meeting. She indicated that the location, shape and condition of the property requires someone with a serious financial commitment and some creativity. The Stuart Neighborhood Association feel they have finally found the appropriate developer.

Mr. Patrick Giles spoke in support. He did not believe that nine residents would cause a traffic concern. He expressed excitement about the effect it will have on safety and being able to walk around and feel comfortable.

Mr. Mark Dunham came forward with concerns. He said he was initially enthusiastic about this project and it sounded like a good plan. Mr. Dunham stated that the proposed project will allow access to the development. He said the lot at 702 Eleanor will be nearly completely paved and it is the only patch of green space at the block. The paving will leave 708 landlocked with almost no parking of its own. Mr. Dunham expressed concern about the long term future of the house at

708 Eleanor, saying that the real and Historic value of this home will decrease. Mr. Dunham feels it is inappropriate for a project of this magnitude to be shoehorned in the oddly shaped piece of land. He stated this feels like gentrification at its worse and the proposed development will place a serious hardship on current residents. Mr. Dunham gave the secretary signed letters from people on the block.

Attorney Murphy came up to verify the owner of record of 708 is in full support. He indicated that the owner has had problems with the lot next to her. Attorney Murphy stated the homeowner is on the signed petition that was submitted and she said she would be at the meeting except she works third shift.

Ms. Cynthia Streeter also spoke against the project. She said that she came back to say she was deceived by the developers, owners, architects, and the Historic Commission into thinking they had already been to the City and all they needed were signatures. She reported they told her the parking area would be just to right of Wendy's driveway (702/708 Eleanor). Ms. Streeter brought forward information that the developers bought Wendy's house. She said the driveway the truck was in is not big enough for an entrance or exit for their project and they were told by the Fire Marshall there would have to be another entrance. Ms. Streeter believes they will either tear up part of Eleanor Street or move the driveway from where they originally told her it would be. She stated that she never imagined that to destroy a community like this was part of Imagine Kalamazoo. Ms. Streeter said it is not true that all of the residents agreed to the plans. She made the statement that Kalamazoo is so busy bringing in business that they have forgotten or don't care about destroying and displacing communities.

Mr. Phillip Reed, Developer, came forward to speak. He said they spent about eight months putting together conceptional designs and they knew parking was going to be an issue. They asked the homeowner if they could purchase 702 Eleanor. The homeowner, Wendy, wanted to sell, but the property was encumbered with a mortgage. To remove the lien on the property, they bought 702/708 as a whole. They are now selling 708 back to Wendy on a land contract. Mr. Reed stated that they kept everyone in the loop the best he could. The concept came together and he wants to be a part of this neighborhood. He believes the project will fit the feel of the neighborhood and will enhance the neighborhood. The building on the property currently attracts negative aspects. Mr. Reed said they really feel it will fit the mold of the Historic neighborhood's mission. If neighbors weren't in support, they wouldn't have proceeded.

Ms. Jennifer Keyser came forward in support of the project. She said her current view out the back window is the Amtrak line, the blighted property and the business loop. She would like to see this go through so she has something pretty to look at. Ms. Keyser stated that this is a great project and she looks forward to it going forward.

Mr. Max Tibbets, Chair of Stuart Neighborhood, came forward in support of the project. He stated that Attorney Murphy has been very up front and reminded the Commissioners that this is a zoning issue. He indicated that they do not want major manufacturing coming into this area. Mr. Tibbets stated the benefit takes us from a blighted, unusable toxic dump and brings ADA apartments. He believes that's a good thing, they need commercial and this will only benefit the community. He reminded those at the meeting that there is still a siteplan review process. Mr. Tibbets believes this will bring Stuart neighborhood to a better entrance in that corridor. He said

that the board highly supports this and recommends the Commissioners vote in favor of this request.

Commissioner Vyas, supported by Commissioner Greenman Wright, motioned to close the public comment portion of the hearing. A voice vote was taken and passed.

Commissioner Milliken clarified that this is a zoning question. He said he appreciated statements regarding parking and the road, but also stated that those are not the questions before them.

Planner Bauckham confirmed that this is a rezoning hearing that just happens to have a project associated with it. He said staff are interested in having that zoning changed as they do not want a manufacturing use there. Planner Bauckham said the site plan is associated, but it is a separate process. The planning commission is a part of the site plan review process.

Commissioner Greenman Wright, supported by Commissioner Vyas, motioned to recommend to the City Commission to approve to rezone 615 W. Kalamazoo Avenue from Zone M-1 (Manufacturing, Limited District) to Zone CMU (Commercial, Mixed-Use District).

Commissioner Greenman Wright stated that they do need to zero in that this is in line with Land Use goals with the Master Plan and the neighborhood plan. She believes they need to pay very close attention to siteplan review process, especially with the parking lot and stormwater management. Commissioner Greenman Wright encouraged Commissioners to be involved with the siteplan process.

A roll call vote was taken and the request was unanimously approved.

G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

H. NEW BUSINESS

Adoption of new calendar.

Planner Anderson spoke about the revised calendar and that it would be posted after the meeting in the Clerk's office. She verified for Commissioners that it did just reflect that day's change.

Commissioner Wissner, supported by Commissioner Coss, motioned to adopt the revised calendar. A voice vote was taken and passed.

I. CITIZENS' COMMENTS (Regarding non-agenda items)

None

J. CITY COMMISSION LIAISON COMMENTS

None

K. CITY PLANNER'S REPORT

Planner Bauckham spoke in regards to the City Planner's Report. He stated there were 28 projects for the year. The new projects are an outdoor café use on W North Street and a TNT Pawn store on Drake and W Michigan. There are 13 pre-applications in various stages of review.

Some highlights of the report were:

- New Hilton Hotel on Rose Street – an 8-story hotel building.
- Village of Kalamazoo Apartments – expanding their club house and redevelopment of site.
- Eastside small homes project – plan to build 7 new smaller houses.
- Lot 9 project – it is a 7-story mixed-use building.
- 400 Rose street – 4 story mixed-use building with 135 Units.
- Hospitality House on S Burdick – under construction and going up quickly.
- Schupan & Sons Medical Office Building - under construction.
- Midtown Market on Howard – grocery store close to being opened. Ace is opened.

Commissioner Wissner expressed curiosity about Yeo laundry which had been on the list previously. Planner Bauckham responded that there was a multi-tenant commercial building up there. It was taken off of the Siteplan list because the siteplan was completed and approved in 2017. There was some discussion of whether unfinished construction projects should remain on the list. Planner Anderson clarified that the current list only contains 2018 Siteplans, but if the Commissioners would like to see more, staff can provide that information.

Planner Bauckham stated that the Northside Neighborhood subplan will be presented at the August meeting.

L. MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS BY PLANNING COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Wissner stated that they were going to look at building signage. He was wondering where they were with that. He stated that he was noticing more very bright LED rope lights around windows and he wondered if there was any ordinances regarding them. He finds it bright and distracting while driving.

Planning Anderson said they are in the process of deciding how to map out changing the zoning ordinance - including the sign code. This should be included in next year's work. The Northside zoning will come before the Planning Commission in September. They will consider some text amendments regarding things that continue to come before the City for variances. Next year they will review a bigger packets of updates – including signage. As far as rope lighting, they will have to do some research to see

if there are ordinances prohibiting it. It may make a difference if it is in the window or if it is an integral part of the sign. Commissioner Wissner requested that staff look at that and report back.

Planner Bauckham suggested that if the lighting is separate from a sign, it could be a traffic safety issue and traffic staff could look and see if it is a hazard to the drivers. He asked Commissioner Wissner to provide a list of sites, so they can take a look at that.

Commissioner Wissner remarked about how exciting it is to have three major building projects downtown.

Commissioner Espinosa stated that he likes the visual of the building that was provided for one of the cases – not just maps. He wondered if they can ask applicants to submit visuals like that in their packets. Planner Anderson responded that they can encourage them, but can't require it.

Commissioner Greenman Wright cautioned that the rendering could appear very positive, but then a stormwater retention pond could be put on the back of it. It's not the same as siteplan review. Commissioner Milliken reminded the board that in some cases they are voting on zoning, not the building.

Commissioner Wissner asked about a fence built on the Northside to protect residents from the X-Train. Planner Anderson said the fence was placed at a height not permitted in the front yard. It went through the enforcement process, before the magistrate. Property owners appealed the ruling citing conflicts with the right to privacy. The fence is currently in the fine phase because they are keeping the fence in place. Planner Anderson explained that the reason you can't put a fence of that height at the property line because it limits sight distances when backing out of driveways.

Commissioner Coss expressed happiness that the City is reclaiming taxable property. He asked if there was a way to do this with other properties – possibly a fair with developers.

Planner Anderson said Rebekah Kik has stepped in role of activator of properties. Properties are being marketed and every week they have a conversation with someone looking for a site to develop. Rebekah tries to play the part of matchmaker and they work with their partners at the Landbank.

M. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Greenman Wright, supported by Commissioner Baartman, moved to adjourn the meeting. A voice vote was taken and passed unanimously. Meeting was adjourned at 8:54pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Christina Anderson,
City Planner
Community Planning & Development